SAWTOOTH FISH HATCHERY

ANNUAL REPORT

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Prepared by:

William R. Stutz, Fish Culturist

INTRODUCTION

Sawtooth Fish Hatchery is a Lower Snake River Compensation Plan hatchery and has been in operation since 1985. Although the primary goal of the hatchery is to produce spring chinook salmon and trap and ship eyed steelhead eggs, we initiated a program in 1990 to stock catchable rainbow trout.

FISH PRODUCTION

In the past, Hayspur Fish Hatchery has been responsible for stocking the area, but due to logistical problems and equipment limitations, it was met with limited success. Hayspur Fish Hatchery still supplied most of our fish for 1991 (60,950), but Mackay Fish Hatchery shipped an additional 8,750 fish when it was determined we should fall short of our requested 65,000 fish. Hayspur Fish Hatchery's budget also covered transportation costs and wages for our temporary employees while they were planting fish.

The second year of the catchable program, 1991 once again proved successful. We planted 69,700 rainbow trout in the Sawtooth Valley and the Stanley Basin. The majority of the fish (46,460) were planted in the Salmon River between Hell Roaring Creek and Thompson Creek, while the remaining (23,240) fish were planted in tributaries to the Salmon River and several smaller accessible lakes in the area (Table 1). The stocked fish averaged 10 inches in length.

Stocking was started on May 21, 1991 and continued through September 6, 1991. During the last week of May and the first three weeks of June, no fish were planted in the Salmon River due to high water. For planning purposes, the river was divided into four sections (Table 2). Stocking sites were determined beforehand based on accessibility to the public, ease of *planting*, and habitat requirements of the fish. Some of the later plants in Stanley Lake Creek and the Yankee Fork Dredge Ponds were either decreased, or cut altogether, because of poor water quality (i.e. warm temperatures and low water).

Sawtooth Hatchery personnel were also involved with stocking cutthroat trout (Table 3). Cutthroat were stocked in the upper Salmon, several tributaries to the upper Salmon, and Josephus Lake to reestablish depleted stocks and to provide additional fishing opportunities. Cutthroat trout were planted in Yellowbelly Lake with hopes of developing a broodstock population for egg taking in the future, and to provide a catch-and-release fishery. Sandpoint Hatchery supplied the cutthroat trout.

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Objectives

Additionally this past summer, Sawtooth personnel were involved with an intensive creel survey on the Salmon River (Table 4). The objectives of the survey included:

– Determining angling effort, catch rates, and return-to-the-creel of rainbow trout.

– Determine harvest rate of steelhead smolts.

– Determine when most of the steelhead smolts leave the upper Salmon River.

– Develop stocking guidelines for number, timing, and location in relation to expected or designed angler use.

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Table 1. Planting sites for catchable rainbow trout.

Perkins Lake	Yankee Fork Ponds
Pettit Lake	Yankee Fork River
Little Redfish Lake	Valley Creek
Cape Horn Lake #2	Stanley Lake Creek
Josephus Lake (lower)	Salmon River

Table 2. Boundaries for Salmon River sections.

Section 8 – Hell Roaring Creek bridge downstream to Buckhorn day use area.
Section 7 - Sunny Gulch campground downstream to Valley Creek.
Section 6 – Valley Creek downstream to Sunbeam.
Section 5 – Sunbeam downstream to Thompson Creek bridge.

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Table 3. Fish size, locations, and quantities of cutthroat trout plants.

Date	Location	Quantity	Lenqth	#/lb
6/20/91	Yellowbelly Lake	5,000	8.5 in.	4.6
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7/09/91	Josephus Lake	500	8.5 in.	4.6
7/09/91	Upper Salmon River	1,000	8.5 in.	4.6
7/10/91	Smiley Creek	1,000	8.5 in.	4.6
7/10/91	Pole Creek	1,000	8.5 in.	4.6
7/10/91	Frenchman Creek	1,000	8.5 in.	4.6
7/10/91	Beaver Creek	500	8.5 in.	4.6

Table 4. Hatchery rainbow trout stocked and harvested, angler effort, percent return-to-the-creel, and fish/h from creel census on the upper Salmon River near Stanley, Idaho in 1991.

Stocked	46,460
Harvested	17,232
Effort (h)	32,671
Return	37%
Fish/h	0.47

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